The Gateless Gate

00/ A Philosopher Asks Buddha

A philosopher asked Buddha: 'Without words, without the wordless, will you you tell me truth?'

The Buddha kept silence.

The philosopher bowed and thanked the Buddha, saying: 'With your loving kindness I have cleared away my delusions and entered the true path.'

After the philosopher had gone, Ananda asked the Buddha what he had attained.

The Buddha replied, 'A good horse runs even at the shadow of the whip.'

Mumon's Comment: Ananda was the disciple of the Buddha. Even so, his opinion did not surpass that of outsiders. I want to ask you monks: How much difference is there between disciples and outsiders?

To tread the sharp edge of a sword
To run on smooth-frozen ice,
One needs no footsteps to follow.
Walk over the cliffs with hands free.

Chapter 4

01/Joshu's Dog

A monk asked Joshu, a Chinese Zen master: 'Has a dog Buddha-nature or not?'

Joshu answered: 'Mu.' [Mu is the negative symbol in Chinese, meaning 'No-thing' or 'Nay'.]

Mumon's comment:s To realize Zen one has to pass through the barrier of the patriachs. Enlightenment always comes after the road of thinking is blocked. If you do not pass the barrier of the patriachs or if your thinking road is not blocked, whatever you think, whatever you do, is like a tangling ghost. You may ask: What is a barrier of a patriach? This one word, Mu, is it.

This is the barrier of Zen. If you pass through it you will see Joshu face to face. Then you can work hand in hand with the whole line of patriachs. Is this not a pleasant thing to do?

If you want to pass this barrier, you must work through every bone in your body, through ever pore in your skin, filled with this question: What is Mu? and carry it day and night. Do not believe it is the common negative symbol meaning nothing. It is not nothingness, the opposite of existence. If you really want to pass this barrier, you should feel like drinking a hot iron ball that you can neither swallor nor spit out.

Then your previous lesser knowledge disappears. As a fruit ripening in season, your subjectivity and objectivity naturally become one. It is like a dumb man who has had a dream. He knows about it but cannot tell it.

When he enters this condition his ego-shell is crushed and he can shake the heaven and move the earth. He is like a great warrior with a sharp sword. If a Buddha stands in his way, he will cut him down; if a patriach offers him any obstacle, he will kill him; and he will be free in this way of birth and death. He can enter any world as if it were his own playground. I will tell you how to do this with this koan:

Just concentrate your whole energy into this Mu, and do not allow any discontinuation. When you enter this Mu and there is no discon-

tinuation, your attainment will be as a candle burning and illuminating the whole universe.

Has a dog Buddha-nature?
This is the most serious question of all.
If you say yes or no,
You lose your own Buddha-nature.

02/ Hyakujo's Fox

Once when Hyakujo delivered some Zen lectures an old man attended them, unseen by the monks. At the end of each talk when the monks left so did he. But one day he remained after the had gone, and Hyakujo asked him: 'Who are you?'

The old man replied: 'I am not a human being, but I was a human being when the Kashapa Buddha preached in this world. I was a Zen master and lived on this mountain. At that time one of my students asked me whether the enlightened man is subject to the law of causation. I answered him: "The enlightened man is not subject to the law of causation." For this answer evidencing a clinging to absoluteness I became a fox for five hundred rebirths, and I am still a fox. Will you save me from this condition with your Zen words and let me get out of a fox's body? Now may I ask you: Is the enlightened man subject to the law of causation?'

Hyakujo said: 'The enlightened man is one with the law of causation.'

At the words of Hyakujo the old man was enlightened. 'I am emancipated,' he said, paying homage with a deep bow. 'I am no more a fox, but I have to leave my body in my dwelling place behind this mountain. Please perform my funeral as a monk.' Then he disappeared.

The next day Hyakujo gave an order through the chief monk to prepare to attend the funeral of a monk. 'No one was sick in the infirmary,' wondered the monks. 'What does our teacher mean?'

After dinner Hyakujo led the monks out and around the mountain. In a cave, with his staff he poked out the corpse of an old fox and then performed the ceremony of cremation.

That evening Hyakujo gave a talk to the monks and told this story about the law of causation.

Obaku, upon hearing this story, asked Hyakujo: 'I understand that a long time ago because a certain person gave a wrong Zen answer he became a fox for five hundred rebirths. Now I was to ask: If some modern master is asked many questions, and he always gives the right answer, what will become of him?'

Hyakujo said: 'You come here near me and I will tell you.'

Obaku went near Hyakujo and slapped the teacher's face with this hand, for he knew this was the answer his teacher intended to give him.

Hyakujo clapped his hands and laughed at the discernment. 'I thought a Persian had a red beard,' he said, 'and now I know a Persian who has a red beard.'

Mumon's comment: 'The enlightened man is not subject.' How can this answer make the monk a fox?

'The enlightened man is at one with the law of causation.' How can this answer make the fox emancipated?

To understand clearly one has to have just one eye.

Controlled or not controlled?
The same dice shows two faces.
Not controlled or controlled,
Both are a grievous error.

03/ Gutei's Finger

Gutei raised his finger whenever he was asked a question about Zen. A boy attendant began to imitate him in this way. When anyone asked the boy what his master had preached about, the boy would raise his finger.

Gutei heard about the boy's mischief. He seized him and cut off his finger. The boy cried and ran away. Gutei called and stopped him. When the boy turned his head to Gutei, Gutei raised up his own finger. In that instant the boy was enlightened.

When Gutei was about to pass from this world he gathered his monks around him. 'I attained my finger-Zen,' he said, 'from my teacher Tenryu, and in my whole life I could not exhaust it.' Then he passed away.

Mumon's comment: Enlightenment, which Gutei and the boy attained, has nothing to do with a finger. If anyone clings to a finger, Tenyru will be so disappointed that he will annihilate Gutei, the boy and the clinger all together.

Gutei cheapens the teaching of Tenyru,
Emancipating the boy with a knife.
Compared to the Chinese god who pushed aside a mountain with one hand
Old Gutei is a poor imitator.

04/ A Beardless Foreigner

Wakun complained when he saw a picture of the bearded Bodhidharma: 'Why hasn't that fellow a beard?'

Mumon's comment: If you want to study Zen, you must it with your heart. When you attain realization, it must be true realization. You yourself must have the face of the great Bodhidharma to see him. Just once such glimpse will be enough. But if you say you met him, you never saw him at all.

One should not discuss a dream
In front of a simpleton.
Why has Bodhidharma no beard?
What an absurd question!

05/ Kyogen Mounts the Tree

Kyogen said: 'Zen is like a man hanging in a tree by his teeth over a precipice. His hands grasp no branch, his feet rest on no limb, and under the three another person asks him: 'Why does Bodhidharma come to China from India?'

'If the man in tree does not answer, he fails; and if he does answer, he falls and loses his life. Now what shall he do?'

Mumon's Comment: In such a predicament the most talented eloquence is no use. If you have memorized all the sutras, you cannot use them. When you can give the right answer, even though your past road was one of death, you open up a new road of life. But if you cannot answer, you should ages hence and the future Buddha, Maitreya.

Kyogen is truly a fool
Spreading that ego-killing poison
That closes his pupils' mouths
And lets their tears stream from their dead eyes.

06/ Buddha Twirls a Flower

When Buddha was in Grdhrakuta mountain he turned a flower in his fingers and held in before his listeners. Every one was silent. Only Maha-Kashapa smiled at this revelation, although he tried to control the lines of his face.

Buddha said: 'I have the eye of the true teaching, the heart of Nirvana, the true aspect of non-form, and the ineffable stride of Dharma. It is not expressed by words, but especially transmitted beyond teaching. This teaching I have given to Maha-Kashapa.'

Mumon's Comment: Golden-faced Guatama thought he could cheat anyone. He made the good listeners as bad, and sold dog meat under the sign of mutton. And he himself thought it was wonderful. What if all the audience had laughed together? How could he have transmit-

ted the teaching? And again, if Maha-Kashapa had not smiled, how could he have transmitted the teaching? If he says that realization can be transmitted, he is like the city slicker that cheats the country dub, and if he says it cannot be transmitted, why does he approve of Maha-Kashapa?

At the turning of a flower
His diguise was exposed.
No one is heaven or earth can surpass
Maha-Kashapa's wrinkled face.

07/ Joshu Washes the Bowl

A monk told Joshu: 'I have just entered the monastery. Please teach me.'

Joshu asked: 'Have you eaten your rice porridge?'

The monk replied: 'I have eaten.'

Joshu said: 'Then you had better wash your bowl.'

At that moment the monk was enlightened.

Mumon's Comment: Joshu is the man who opens his mouth and shows his heart. I doubt if this monk really saw Joshu's heart. I hope he did not mistake the bell for a pitcher.

It is too clear and so it is hard to see.
A dunce once searched for fire with a lighted lantern.
Had he known what fire was,
He could have cooked his rice much sooner.

08/ Keichu's Wheel

Getsuan said to this students: 'Keichu, the first wheel-maker of

China, made two wheels of fifty spokes each. Now, suppose you removed the nave uniting the spokes. What would become of the wheel? And had Keichu done thism could he be called the master wheel-maker?'

Mumon's Comment: If anyone can answer this question instantly, his eyes will be like a comet and his mind like a flash of lightning.

When the hubless wheel turns,
Master or no master can stop it.
It turns above heaven and below earth,
South, north, east and west.

09/ A Buddha Before History

A monk asked Seijo: 'I understand that a Buddha who lived before recorded history sat in meditation for ten cycles of existence and could not realize the highest truth, and so could not become fully emancipated. Why was this so?'

Seijo replied: 'Your question is self-explanatory.'

The monk asked: 'Since the Buddha was meditating, why could he not fulfill Buddahood?'

Seijo said: 'He was not a Buddha.'

Mumon's Comment: I will allow his realization, but I will not admit his understanding. When one ignorant attains realization he is a saint. When a saint begins to understand he is an ignorant.

It is better to realize mind than body.
When the mind is realized one need not worry about body.
When mind and body become one
The man is free. Then he desires no praising.

10/ Seizei Alone and Poor

A monk named Seizei asked of Sozan: 'Seizei is alone and poor. Will you give him support?'

Sozan asked: 'Seizei?'

Seizei responded: 'Yes, sir.'

Sozan said: 'You have Zen, the best wine in China, and alrady have finished three cups, and still you are saying that they did not even wet your lips.'

Mumon's Comment: Seizei overplayed his hand. Why was it so? Because Sozan had eyes and knew whom to deal. Even so, I want to ask: At what point did Seizei drink wine?

The poorest man in China,
The bravest man in China,
He barely sustains himself,
Yet wishes to rival the wealthiest.

11/ Joshu Examines a Monk in Meditation

Joshu went to a place were a monk had retired to meditate and asked him: 'What is, is what?'

The monk raised his fist.

Joshu replied: 'Ships cannot remain where the water is too shallow.' And he left.

A few days later Joshu went again to visit the monk and asked the same question.

The monk answered the same way.

Joshu said: 'Well given, well taken, well killed, well save.' And he bowed to the monk.

Mumon's Comment: The raised fist was the same both times. Why is it Joshu did not admit the first and approved the second one? Where is the fault?

Whoever answers this knows that Joshu's tongue has no bone so he can use it freely. Yet perhaps Joshu is wrong. Or, through that monk, he may have discovered his mistake.

If anyone thinks that the one's insight exceeds the other's, he has no eyes.

The light of the eyes is as a comet,
And Zen's activity is as lightning.
The sword that kills the man
Is the sword that saves the man.

12/ Zuigan Calls His Own Master

Zuigan called out to himself every day: 'Master.'

Then he answered himself: 'Yes, sir.'

And after that he added: 'Become sober.'

Again he answered: 'Yes, sir.'

'And after that,' he continued, 'do not be deceived by others.'

'Yes, sir; yes, sir,' he answered.

Mumon's Comment: Old Zuigan sells out and buys himself. He is opening a puppet show. He uses one mask to call 'Master' and another that answers the master. Another mask says 'Sober up' and another, 'Don't be cheated by others.' If anyone clings to any of his masks, he is mistaken, yet if he imitates Zuigan, he will make himself fox-like.

Some Zen students do not realize the true man in a mask
Because they recognize ego-soul.
Ego-sould is the seed of birth and death,

And foolish people call it the true man.

13/ Tokusan Holds His Bowl

Tokusan went to the dining room from the meditation hall holding his bowl. Seppo was on duty cooking. When he met Tokusan he said: 'The dinner drum is not yet beaten. Where are you going with your bowl?'

So Tokusan returned to his room.

Seppo told Ganto about this. Ganto said: 'Old Tokusan did not understand the ultimate truth.'

Tokusan heard of this remark and asked Ganto to come to him. 'I have heard,' he said, 'you are not approving my Zen.' Ganto admitted this indirectly. Tokusan said nothing.

The next day Tokusan delivered an entirely different kind of lecture to the monks. Ganto laughed and clapped his hands, saying: 'I see our old man understands the ultimate truth indeed. None in China can surpass him.'

Mumon's Comment: Speaking about ultimate truth, both Ganto and Tokusan did not even dream it. After all, they are dummies.

Whoever understands the first truth
Should understand the ultimate truth.
The last and first,
Are they not the same?

14/ Nansen Cuts the Cat in Two

Nansen saw the monks of the eastern and western halls fighting over a cat. He seized the cat and told the monks: 'If any of you say a good word, you can save the cat.'

No one answered. So Nansen boldly cut the cat in two pieces.

That evening Joshu returned and Nansen told him about this. Joshu removed his sandals and, placing them on his head, walked out.

Nansen said: 'If you had been there, you could have saved the cat.'

Mumon's Comment: Why did Joshu put his sandals on his head? If anyone answers this question, he will understand exactly how Nansen enforced the edict. If not, he should watch his own head.

Had Joshu been there,
He would have enforced the edict oppositely.
Joshua snatches the sword
And Nansen begs for his life.

15/ Tozan's Three Blows

Tozan went to Ummon. Ummon asked him where he had come from.

Tozan said: 'From Sato village.'

Ummon asked: 'In what temple did you remain for the summer?'

Tozan replied: 'The temple of Hoji, south of the lake.'

'When did you leave there?' asked Ummon, wondering how long Tozan would continue with such factual answers.

'The twenty-fifth of August,' answered Tozan.

Ummon said: 'I should give you three blows with a stick, but today I forgive you.'

The next day Tozan bowed to Ummon and asked: 'Yesterday you forgave me three blows. I do not know why you thought me wrong.'

Ummon, rebuking Tozan's spiritless responses, said: 'You are good for nothing. You simply wander from one monastery to another.'

Before Ummon's words were ended Tozan was enlightened.

Mumon's Comment: Ummon fed Tozan good Zen food. If Tozan can digest it, Ummon may add another member to his family.

In the evening Tozan swam around in a sea of good and bad, but at dawn Ummon crushed his nut shell. After all, he wasn't so smart.

Now, I want to ask: Did Tozan deserve the three blows? If you say yes, not only Tozan but every one of you deserves them. If you say no, Ummon is speaking a lie. If you answer this question clearly, you can eat the same food as Tozan.

The lioness teaches her cubs roughly;
The cubs jump and she knocks them down.
When Ummon saw Tozan his first arrow was light;
His second arrow shot deep.

16/ Bells and Robes

Ummon asked: 'The world is such a wide world, why do you answer a bell and don ceremonial robes?'

Mumon's Comment: When one studies Zen one need not follow sound or colour or form. Even though some have attained insight when hearing a voice or seeing a colour or a form, this is a very common way. It is not true Zen. The real Zen student controls sound, colour, form, and actualizes the truth in his everyday life.

Sound comes to the ear, the ear goes to the sound. When you blot out sound and sense, what do you understand? While listening with ears one never can understand. To understand intimately one should see sound.

When you understand, you belong to the family;
When you do not understand, you are a stranger.
Those who do not understand belong to the family,
And when they understand they are stran

17/ The Three Calls of the Emperor's Teacher

Chu, called Kokushi, the teacher of the emperor, called to his attendant: 'Oshin.'

Oshin answered: 'Yes.'

Chu repeated, to test his pupil: 'Oshin.'

Oshin repeated: 'Yes.'

Chu called: 'Oshin.'

Oshin answered: 'Yes.'

Chu said 'I ought to apologize for you for all this calling, but really you ought to apologize to me.'

Mumon's Comment: When Old Chu called Oshin three tiems his tongue was rotting, but when Oshin answered three tiems his words were brilliant. Chu was getting decrepit and lonesome, and his method of teaching was like holding a cow's head to feed it clover.

Oshin did not trouble to show his Zen either. His satisfied stomach had no desire to feast. When the country is prosperous everyone is indolent; when the home is wealthy the children are spoilt.

Now I want to ask you: Which one should apologize?

When prison stocks are iron and have no place for the head, the prisoner is doubly in trouble.
When there is no place for Zen in the head of our generation, it is in grievous trouble.
If you try to hold up the gate and door of a falling house,
You also will be in trouble.

18/ Tozan's Three Pounds

A monk asked Tozan when he was weighing some flax: 'What is Buddha?'

Tozan said: 'This flax weighs three pounds.'

Mumon's Comment: Old Tozan's Zen is like a clam. The minute the shell opens you see the whole inside. However, I want to ask you: Do you see the real Tozan?

Three pounds of flax in front of your nose,
Close enough, and mind is still closer.
Whoever talks about affirmation and negation
Lives in the right and wrong region.

19/ Everyday Life is the Path

Joshu asked Nansen: 'What is the path?'

Nansen said: 'Everyday life is the path.'

Joshu asked: 'Can it be studied?'

Nansen said: 'If you try to study, you will be far away from it.'

Joshu asked: 'If I do not study, how can I know it is the path?'

Nansen said: 'The path does not belong to the perception world, neither does it belong to the nonperception world. Cognition is a delusion and noncognition is senseless. If you want to reach the true path beyond doubt, place yourself in the same freedom as sky. You name it neither good nor not-good.'

At these words Joshu was enlightened.

Mumon's Comment: Nansen could met Joshu's frozen doubts at once when Joshu asked his questions. I doubt that if Joshu reached the point that Nansen did. He needed thirty more years of study.

In spring, hundreds of flowers; in autumn, a harvest moon;
In the summer, a refreshing breeze; in winter snow will accompany.

your.
If useless things do not hang in your mind,
Any season is a good season for you.

20/ The Enlightened Man

Shogen asked: 'Why does the enlightened man not stand on his feet and explain himself?' And he also said: 'It is not necessary for speech to come from the tongue.'

Mumon's Comment: Shogen spoke plainly enough, but how many will understand? If anyone comprehends, he should come to my place and test out my big stick. Why, look here, to test real gold you must see it through fire.

If the feet of enlightenment moved, the great ocean would overflow;
If that head bowed, it would look down upon the heavens.
Such a body hsa no place to rest....
Let another continue this poem.

21/ Dried Dung

A monk asked Ummon: 'What is Buddha?' Ummon answered him: 'Dried dung.'

Mumon's Comment: It seems to me Ummon is so poor he cannot distinguish the taste of one food from another, or else he is too busy to write readable letters. Well, he tried to hold his school with dried dung. And his teaching was just as useless.

Lightning flashes,
Sparks shower.
In one blink of your eyes
You have missed seeing.

22/ Kashapa's Preaching Sign

Anada asked Kashapa: 'Buddha gave you the golden-woven robe of successorship. What else did he give you?'

Kashapa said: 'Ananda.'

Ananda answered: 'Yes, brother.'

Said Kashapa: 'Now you can take down my preaching sign and put up your own.'

Mumon's Comment: If one understands this, he will see the old brotherhood still gathering, but if not, even though he has studied the truth from ages before the Buddhas, he will not attain enlightenment.

The point of the question is dull but the answer is intimate.
How many persons hearing it will open their eyes?
Elder brother calls and younger brother answers,
This spring does not belong to the ordinary season.

23/ Do Not Think Good, Do Not Think Not-Good

When he became emancipated the sixth patriach received from the fifth patriach the bowl and robe given from the Buddha to his successors, generation after generation.

A monk named E-myo out of envy pursued the patriach to take this great treasure away from him. The sixth patriach placed the bowl and robe on a stone in the road and told E-myo: 'These objects just symbolize the faith. There is no use fighting over them. If you desire to take them, take them now.'

When E-myo went to move the bowl and robe they were as heavy

as mountains. He could not budge them. Trembling for shame he said: 'I came wanting the teaching, not the material treasures. Please teach me.'

The sixth patriach said: 'When you do not think good and when you do not think not-good, what is your true self?'

At these words E-myo was illumined. Perspiration broke out all over his body. He cried and bowed, saying: 'You have given me the secret words and meanings. Is there yet a deeper part of the teaching?'

The sixth patriach replied: 'What I have told you is no secret at all. When you realize your true self the secret belongs to you.'

E-myo said: 'I was under the fifth patriach for many years but could not realize my true self until now. Through your teaching I find the source. A person drinks water and knows himself whether it is cold or warm. May I call you my teacher?'

The sixth patriach replied: 'We studied together under the fifth patriach. Call him your teacher, but just treasure what you have attained.'

Mumon's Comment: The sixth patriach certainly was kind in such an emergency. If was as if he removed the skin and seeds from the fruit and then, opening the pupil's mouth, let him eat.

You cannot describe it, you cannot picture it,
You cannot admire it, you cannot sense it.
It is your true self, it has nowhere to hide.
When the world is destroyed, it will no be destroyed.

24/ Without Words, Without Silence

A monk asked Fuketsu: 'Without speaking, without silence, how can you express the truth?'

Fuketsu observed: 'I always remember spring-time in southern China. The birds sing among innumerable kinds of fragrant flowers.'

Mumon's Comment: Fuketsu used to have lightning Zen. Whenever he had the oppurtunity, he flashed it. But this time he failed to do so and only borrowed from an old Chinese poem. Never mind Fuketsu's Zen. If you want to express the truth, throw out your words, throw out your silence, and tell me about your own Zen.

Without revealing his own penetration,
He offered another's words, not his to give.
Had he chattered on and on,
Even his listeners would have been embarassed.

25/ Preaching from the Third Seat

In a dream Kyozen went to Maitreya's Pure Land. He recognized himself seated in the third seat in the abode of Maitreya. Someone announced: 'Today the one who sits in the third seat will preach.'

Kyozen arose and, hitting the gavel, said: 'The truthof Mahayana teaching is transcendent, above words and thought. Do you understand?'

Mumon's Comment: I want to ask you monks: Did he preach or did he not?

When he opens his mouth he is lost. When he seals his mouth he is lost. If he does not open it, if he does not seal it, he is 108,000 miles from the truth.

In the light of day,
Yet in a dream he talks of a dream.
A monster among monsters,
He intended to deceive the whole crowd.

26/ Two Monks Rolls Up the Screen

Hogen of Seiryo monastery was about to lecture before dinner when he noticed that the bamboo screen lowered for meditation had not been rolled up. He pointed to it. Two monks arose from the audience and rolled it up.

Hogen, observing the physical moment, said: 'The state of the first monk is good, not that of the other.'

Mumon's Comment: I want to ask you: Which of those two monks gained and which lost? If any of you has one eye, he will see the failure on the teacher's part. However, I am not discussing gain and loss.

When the screen is rolled up the great sky opens,
Yet the sky is not attuned to Zen.
It is best to forget the great sky
And to retire from every wind.

27/ It is Not Mind, It is Not Buddha, It is Not Things

A monk asked Nansen: 'Is there a teaching no master ever preached before?'

Nansen said: 'Yes, there is.'

'What is it?' asked the monk.

Nansen replied: 'It is not mind, it is not Buddha, it is not things.'

Mumon's Comment: Old Nansen gave away his treasure-words. He must have been greatly upset.

Nansen was too kind and lost his treasure.
Truly, words have no power.
Even though the mountain becomes the sea,
Words cannot open another's mind.

28/ Blow Out the Candle

Tokusan was studying Zen under Ryutan. One night he came to Ryutan and asked many questions. The teacher said: 'The night is getting old. Why don't you retire?'

So Tukusan bowed and opened the screen to go out, observing: 'It

is very dark outside.'

Ryutan offered Tokusan a lighted candle to find his way. Just as Tokusan received it, Ryutan blew it out. At that moment the mind of Tokusan was opened.

'What have you attained?' asked Ryutan.

'From now on,' said Tokusan, 'I will not doubt the teacher's words.'

The next day Ryutan told the monks at his lecture: 'I see one monk among you. His teeth are like the sword tree, his mouth is like the blood bowl. If you hit him hard with a big stick, he will not even so much as look back at you. Someday he will mount the highest peak and carry my teaching there.'

On that day, in front of the lecture hall, Tokusan burned to ashes his commentaries on the sutras. He said: 'However abstruse the teachings are, in comparison with this enlightenment they are like a single hair to the great sky. However profound the complicated knowledge of the world, compared to this enlightenment it is like one drop of water to the great ocean.' Then he left the monastry.

Mumon's Comment: When Tokusan was in his own country he was not satisfied with Zen although he had heard about it. He thought: 'Those Southern monks say they can teach Dharma outside of the sutras. They are all wrong. I must teach them.' So he travelled south. He happened to stop near Ryutan's monastery for refreshments. An old woman who was there asked him: 'What are you carrying so heavily?'

Tokusan replied: 'This is a commentary I have made on the Diamond Sutra after many years of work.'

The old woman said: 'I read that sutra which says: "The past mind cannot be held, the present mind cannot be held." You wish some tea and refreshments. Which mind do you propose to use for them?'

Tokusan was as though dumb. Finally he asked the woman: 'Do you know of any good teacher around here?'

The old woman referred him to Ryutan, not more than five miles away. So he went to Ryutan in all humility, quite different from when

he had started his journey. Ryutan in turn was so kind he forgot his own dignity. It was like pouring muddy water over a drunken man to sober him. After all, it was an unnecessary comedy.

A hundred hearings cannot surpass one seeing,
But after you see the teacher, that once glance cannot surpass a hundred hearings.
His nose was very high
But he was blind after all

29/ Not the Wind, Not the Flag

Two monks were arguing about a flag. One said: 'The flag is moving.'

The other said: 'The wind is moving.'

The sixth patriach happened to be passing by. He told them: 'Not the wind, not the flag; mind is moving.'

Mumon's Comment: The sixth patriach said: 'The wind is not moving, the flag is not moving. Mind is moving.' What did he mean? If you understand this intimately, you will see the two monks there trying to buy iron and gaining gold. The sixth patriach could not bear to see those two dull heads, so he made such a bargain.

Wind, flag, mind moves.
The same understanding.
When the mouth opens
All are wrong.

30/ This Mind is Buddha

Daibai asked Baso: 'What is Buddha?'

Baso said: 'This mind is Buddha.'

Mumon's Comment: If anyone wholly understands this, he is wearing Buddha's clothing, he is eating Buddha's food, he is speaking Buddha's

words, he is behaving as Buddha, he is Buddha.

This anecdote, however, has given many pupil the sickness of formality. If one truly understands, he will wash out his mouth for three days after saying the word Buddha, and he will close his ears and flee after hearing 'This mind is Buddha.'

Under blue sky, in bright sunlight,
One need not search around.
Asking what Buddha is
Is like hiding loot in one's pocket and declaring oneself innocent.

31/ Joshu Investigates

A travelling monk asked an old woman the road to Taizan, a popular temple supposed to give wisdom to the one who worships there. The old woman said: 'Go straight ahead.' When the monk proceeded a few steps, she said to herself: 'He also is a common church-goer.'

Someone told this incident to Joshu, who said: 'Wait until I investigate.' The next day he went and asked the same question, and the old woman gave the same answer.

Joshu remarked: 'I have investigated that old woman.'

Mumon's Comment: The old woman understood how war is planned, but she did not know how spies sneak in behind her tent. Old Joshu played the spy's work and turned the tables on her, but he was not an able general. Both had their faults. Now I want to ask you: What was the point of Joshu's investigating the old woman?

When the question is common
The answer is also common.
When the question is sand in a bowl of boiled rice
The answer is a stick in the soft mud.

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